

What Is CSTB?

As a part of the National Research Council, the Computer Science and Telecommunications Board (CSTB) was established in 1986 to provide independent advice to the federal government on technical and public policy issues relating to computing and communications. Composed of leaders from industry and academia, CSTB conducts studies of critical national issues and makes recommendations to government, industry, and academic researchers. CSTB also provides a neutral meeting ground for consideration of complex issues where resolution and action may be premature. It convenes invitational discussions that bring together principals from the public and private sectors, ensuring consideration of all perspectives. The majority of CSTB's work is requested by federal agencies and Congress, consistent with its National Academies context.

A pioneer in framing and analyzing Internet policy issues, CSTB is unique in its comprehensive scope and effective, interdisciplinary appraisal of technical, economic, social, and policy issues. From its early work in computer and communications security, cyber-assurance and information systems trustworthiness have been cross-cutting themes in CSTB's work. CSTB has produced several reports regarded as classics in the field, and it continues to address these topics as they grow in importance.

To do its work, CSTB draws on some of the best minds in the country, inviting experts to participate in its projects as a public service. Studies are conducted by balanced committees without direct financial interests in the topics they are addressing. Those committees meet, confer electronically, and build analyses through their deliberations. Additional expertise from around the country is tapped in a rigorous process of review and critique, further enhancing the quality of CSTB reports. By engaging groups of principals, CSTB obtains the facts and insights critical to assessing key issues.

The mission of CSTB is to

Respond to requests from the government, nonprofit organizations, and private industry for advice on computer and telecommunications issues and from the government for advice on computer and telecommunications systems planning, utilization, and modernization;

Monitor and promote the health of the fields of computer science and telecommunications, with attention to issues of human resources, information infrastructure, and societal impacts;

Initiate and conduct studies involving computer science, computer technology, and telecommunications as critical resources; and

Foster interaction among the disciplines underlying computing and telecommunications technologies and other fields, at large and within the National Academies.

More information about CSTB can be obtained online at <http://www.cstb.org>.

